

ST. INIGOES, MD – Congressman Steny Hoyer today attended the third demonstration of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) at the Webster Field Annex of Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, MD. Rep. Hoyer participated in the opening ceremony and gave opening remarks to kick off the demonstration.

Congressman Hoyer has secured more than \$1 million dollars in federal funds for upgrades at Patuxent River and Webster Field to better support Unmanned Aerial Vehicle/Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle research, development, testing and evaluation programs.

Following are Congressman Hoyer's remarks as prepared for delivery:

"Once again, I am pleased to join you for what is rapidly becoming our nation's best UAV expo. Welcome to Southern Maryland, home of Pax River – a premier Department of Defense installation with unique capabilities not found anywhere else in the world.

"Today, we will watch a wide variety of UAVs as they take to the skies and demonstrate their flying agility and capabilities. They now come in many shapes and a very wide variety of sizes. The challenge ahead is not only to continue to improve the flying qualities of these systems, but how do we maximize these highly versatile machines.

"In Iraq and Afghanistan, these systems are already proving themselves in combat situations in missions being flown around the clock. Commanders are inserting UAVs into situations that previously would have been too dangerous for manned aircraft. Development of this emerging technology is being pushed and accelerated every day as new requirements arise.

"I can remember not too many years ago, hearing the prediction that within 40 years, we would be flying very few manned fighter aircraft. That timeframe is now sooner than anyone could have expected just a few years ago.

"Today, as we gather again for this great expo, I can confidently join the optimistic predictions for this industry. These systems you are developing represent a critical and rapidly growing component of our national security.

“Let me just say to each of you, keep up your good work and dedicated efforts. The platforms you are developing will continue to be challenged by the desire to stuff them with more equipment and systems as they take on an increasing share of our national security workload.

“We want you to return to Southern Maryland and emphasize to you that you don’t have to wait until the next UAV expo. We are ready to partner with you and share the unique assets of both Pax River and here, at St. Inigoes, Webster Field.

“Pax has built a capability that is now unmatched in the world to support complex systems integration and performance work. Our centerpiece is the Air Combat Environment Test and Evaluation Facility – better known as ACETEF, which has two anechoic chambers – a large one and a small one – that can put any platform through the rigors of a combat environment without ever leaving the ground. The workforce at Pax is ready to put the ACETEF and other assets to work to partner with you in the development of these increasingly sophisticated systems.

“Within a few months, Pax will receive the first of 2 Global Hawk aircraft to begin demonstrating applications for maritime environments. We believe Pax River is the ideal location to exploit new missions for this and other UAV platforms as we expand their mission and interoperability with other complex weapons systems.

“Again, I thank you for your dedication to our national security and look forward to working with you into the future.”

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